IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently amended): A digital image reading apparatus, comprising:

~~reading means for~~ a reader configured to optically ~~reading~~ read an image of a document to output digital image data;

first setting means for setting a reading rate in a given scanning direction to a desired value;

an image memory configured to ~~for~~ temporarily ~~storing~~ store the image data;

second setting means for setting parameters related to reading the image of the document based on communication with an external apparatus,

wherein the parameters include at least one of a number of pixels in a main (horizontal) scanning area, resolution (dpi) in a vertical scanning area, image composition (binary or multivalue), an image data transfer rate, a document size, and a number of document sheets; and

computation means for computing a total amount of the image data from the parameters,

wherein the first setting means sets the reading rate based on the total amount of the image data.

Claim 2 (Original): The apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein the first setting means resets the reading rate to a value higher than a value to which the reading rate is set when the total amount of the image data is smaller than a storage capacity of the image memory.

Claim 3 (Currently amended): The apparatus as claimed in Claim 1, further comprising:

transfer means for transferring the image data from the image memory to the external apparatus by communication means.

Claim 4 (Original): The apparatus as claimed in claim 3, wherein IEEE 1394 is employed as the communication means.

Claim 5 (Original): The apparatus as claimed in claim 3, wherein SCSI is employed as the communication means.

Claim 6 (Original): The apparatus as claimed in Claim 1, wherein said first setting means sets the reading rate by controlling a stepping motor involved in scanning in the given scanning direction.

Claim 7 (Original): The apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein the first setting means primarily sets the reading rate on the basis of an available capacity of said image memory.

Claim 8 (Cancelled).

Claim 9 (New): A digital image reading apparatus, comprising:

a reading part configured to optically read an image of a document to output digital image data;

a first setting part configured to set a reading rate in a given scanning direction to a desired value;

an image memory for temporarily storing the image data;

a second setting part configured to set parameters related to reading the image of the document based on communication with an external apparatus,

wherein the parameters include at least one of a number of pixels in a main (horizontal) scanning area, resolution (dpi) in a vertical scanning area, image composition (binary or multivalue), an image data transfer rate, a document size, and a number of document sheets; and

a computation part configured to compute a total amount of the image data from the parameters,

wherein the first setting part sets the reading rate based on the total amount of the image data.

Claim 10 (New): The apparatus of claim 9, wherein the first setting part resets a reading rate to a value higher than a value to which the reading rate is set when the total amount of the image data is smaller than a storage capacity of the image memory.

Claim 11 (New): The apparatus of Claim 9, further comprising:

a transferring part which transfers the image data from the image memory to the external apparatus by a communication link.

Claim 12 (New): The apparatus of claim 11, wherein IEEE 1394 is employed as the communication link.

Claim 13 (New): The apparatus of claim 11, wherein SCSI is employed as the communication link.

Claim 14 (New): The apparatus of Claim 9, wherein said first setting part sets a reading rate by controlling a stepping motor involved in scanning in a given scanning direction.

Claim 15 (New): The apparatus of claim 9, wherein the first setting part primarily sets a reading rate on the basis of an available capacity of said image memory.